

The Ciconiine stem gave off *Abdimia* before the Ciconiine characters were fully acquired. *Balæniceps* appears to me to be a further specialization of the Ardeidæ, and not to stand nearer to the form which gave rise to the Ardeidæ. I believe this because *Balæniceps* is decidedly a Heron in respect of its alimentary tract, powder-down patches, and syrinx; the loss of the syringeal muscles is a further specialization, and evidently a recent one (from the fact of their degenerate equivalent being present). The form of the syrinx in the Herodiones was originally that which is now seen in *Scopus* and the Ardeidæ; that this is so, seems to be shown by the fact that the Ardeine form of syrinx is found in so many other groups of birds, while the Ciconiine form is peculiar to the Ciconiæ. In *Abdimia* (and to a less extent in *Xenorhynchus*) the syrinx has not quite acquired the typical Ciconiine form—the *membrana tympaniformis* is, to a considerable extent, left; that is to say, the bronchial semi-rings have not yet united to obliterate the *membrana tympaniformis*, as is the case with the typical Storks. For this reason I regard *Abdimia* as having branched off from the main stem a little before the development of the typical Storks.

4. Description of a Gigantic new Species of *Aspergillum*  
from Japan. By G. B. SOWERBY, F.Z.S., F.L.S.

[Received May 3, 1888.]

ASPERGILLUM GIGANTEUM, n. sp.

*Asp. testa valvis magnis, subtrapezoideis, concentricè rugosis irregulariter striatis; antice paulum attenuatis, rotundatis; postice latioribus oblique truncatis. Vagina maxima, elongata, solidiuscula, subrecta, calculos et arenulas agglutinante; limbo conspicue irregulariter 6-7-fariam foliato; disco irregulariter convexo, calculos et conchas agglutinante, tubulis numerosis parvisculis rotundatis armato.*

*Hab.* Japonia.

A species of extraordinary magnitude, the specimen being over 13 inches ( $32\frac{1}{2}$  centim.) in length and about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches (4 centim.) in diameter, in the widest part. The sheath is of the form of *A. vaginiferum*; but the valves are much larger in proportion and of quite a different form, which, apart from the unusual dimensions, would be sufficient to constitute it a distinct species. The valves are 25 millim. long and 15 broad.

A second specimen (somewhat smaller, but in better condition) of this species is in the Museum of the Zoological Society ("Natura Artis Magistra") of Amsterdam, placed there by Mr. Oltmans, the late Curator, with the name of *Aspergillum japonicum*, confirming the locality. So far as is at present known, *Aspergillum vaginiferum* inhabits exclusively the Red Sea.

June 5, 1888.

Prof. Flower, C.B., LL.D., F.R.S., President, in the Chair.

The registered additions to the Society's Menagerie during the month of May were 144 in number. Of these 55 were acquired by presentation, 37 by purchase, 2 by exchange, 30 on deposit, and 20 by birth. The total number of departures during the same period, by death and removals, was 113.

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Mr. H. E. Dresser exhibited an example of a new species of Shrike from the Transcaspian district, and made the following remarks:—

“ Dr. Gustaf Radde has lately sent to me for examination and comparison a small but interesting collection of birds made by him during his late trip in the Transcaspian district; and amongst other rarities I find a Shrike which is certainly new, and which I propose to name *Lanius raddei*, after its discoverer. It belongs to the group of small Shrikes which have been separated by Bonaparte under the generic title of *Otomela*, but differs from all of them in approaching *Lanius excubitor* and its allies in general tone of colour. General colour above bluish grey, much lighter and clearer on the crown and forehead, the lower portion of the mantle washed with pale brownish buff; wings dull blackish, the secondaries narrowly margined with dull white; alar patch very small; central tail-feathers black, the outermost rectrix on each side white, but with a black line along the shaft which broadens considerably towards the tip, the next two with much more black towards the tip; a narrow line over the forehead and a broad streak extending through the eye and over the ear-coverts deep black, bordered above with white; chin, throat, and entire underparts, with the under wing-coverts, pure white; bill and feet black. Total length about 6·75 inches, culmen 0·6, wing 3·55, tail 3·2, tarsus 0·9.

“ Although differing so much in coloration from *Lanius vittatus*, for it lacks the broad black frontal band, the maroon on the mantle, and the rufous flanks, yet in many respects *L. raddei* approaches nearest to that species, of which it may be called a pale grey form. The specimen in question was obtained at Kulkulais, on the 24th August, 1886 (old style), and is a male, and apparently an old one.”

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Mr. Sclater, on the part of Mr. F. M. Campbell, F.Z.S., exhibited a pair of Pallas's Sand-Grouse (*Syrrhaptes paradoxus*), shot at Gepps Farm, between Hoddesden and Hertford, at 6 P.M. on May 20th, 1888, and made remarks on the numerous recent occurrences of this species in Western Europe. Mr. Sclater also stated that a living specimen of this bird had just been received by the Society, presented by H. Hewat Crane, Esq., of West Foulden, Berwick-on-Tweed, having been captured at that place on May 28th.

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The Secretary exhibited, on behalf of Prof. R. Collett, C.M.Z.S.,

a nest, eggs, and two young ones in down of the Ivory Gull (*Larus eburnea*), belonging to the Tromsö Museum. These specimens had been obtained in August, 1887, by Capt. J. Harrison, on a small island lying about sixteen miles to the east of Cape Smith, in Spitzbergen.

The following papers were read :—

1. On Lepidoptera collected by Major Yerbury in Western India in 1886 and 1887. By W. WARREN, M.A., F.E.S.

[Received May 8, 1888.]

The insects which form the subject-matter of this paper were collected by Major Yerbury in the summer of 1886 and the following spring, through pretty nearly the same range of localities as those previously forwarded by him, and treated of by Mr. A. G. Butler in the 'Proceedings' of this Society for 1886, pp. 355-395. For the account of these localities it will be sufficient to refer to that paper. Both collections are in the possession of the British Museum. The present one contains 544 specimens, distributed among 206 species (not reckoning about 12 which from their condition are beyond positive identification or description). Of these about 50, so far as I have been able to ascertain, are either new or undescribed, while 3 require to be placed in genera by themselves. Several, as was to be expected, are the same as those of the previous consignment.

I must not forget to record my indebtedness to Mr. A. G. Butler and Mr. W. F. Kirby for useful suggestions and kind assistance rendered in various ways.

By way of preface, in some sort, to the reading of the accompanying paper, I wish to draw attention to one or two points in which I have felt myself honestly compelled to differ from authorities of far greater experience, *in general*, than I can lay claim to, and thereby to acquit myself of any intention to depreciate their labours.

There would seem to have arisen a tendency to exaggerate slight external modifications, due to varying conditions of place and development, into specific differences, and that, too, often from the examination of a very limited number of examples. Now as "in the multitude of counsellors there is safety," so, from the consideration of a larger number of examples, from different localities, subject to different conditions, I think we shall arrive at the conclusion that the number of species is not infinite.

(i.) In the necessity of reducing *Leucania bistrigata*, Moore, and *Leucania penicillata*, Moore, to synonyms of *Leucania l-album*, I am glad to say that Mr. Butler himself coincides.

(ii.) *Amyna stricta*, Walker, I regard as of general distribution throughout the tropical zone, and look forward confidently to the time when a larger number of examples of the so-called species, *A. undulifera*, Butler, *A. stellata*, Butler, and *A. stigmatula*, Snellen, will prove them to be merely local forms. In this opinion, however, Mr. Butler, naturally enough, does not yet agree. Nor, in making